



## Duck Creek Fuels Prescribed Fire Cedar City Ranger District, Dixie National Forest

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**Size:** 2,300 acres planned for FY13

**Planned Burn Date:**

January-April/ September-December 2013

**Expected Duration:** Approximately 10-20 days for ignition operations, and 5-10 days for fire to clean up accumulated fuels.

**Location:** 1 mile south of Duck Creek Village Utah.

**Legal Description:** The majority of the entire project lies in Township 38 South, Range 7 West, all sections.

With smaller portions of the project in Township 39 South, Ranges 8 West, and 7 West, multiple sections.

**Project Description:** Duck Creek Fuels Burn area is south and east of Duck Creek village and continues to the rim of the Markagaunt plateau. Duck Creek Fuels Burn area encompasses the following subdivisions; Duck Creek village, Strawberry, Swains creek, Zion View, and Harris Flat. Fuels are Hand and Machine Piles of Ponderosa Pine and Mixed Conifer. The goals of this project are to log and thin overgrown forests, and retain the larger fire-resistant trees and reduce the resultant slash. This is primarily done by logging some of the larger trees, thinning and piling the smaller trees, burning the piled slash. Reducing hazardous fuels in this manner will reduce the risk of a high intensity wildfire from occurring in the area and then leaving Forest Service Lands and going on to private land, and vice versa. Fire suppression will be more attainable in the treated areas after fuels have been reduced and a much higher possibility of success may be present thereafter to suppress any wildfire that may occur in the immediate area. The entire project area is large at just over 12,000 acres, and to date (January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013) just over 7000 acres have been completed.

**Project Success:** On June 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 a human caused fire (Swains Creek Fire ½ acre burned) started in one of the completed Duck Creek Fuels Prescribed Fire Project areas directly adjacent to the Community of Swains Creek. Resources arrived on scene almost 45 minutes after being dispatched and extinguished the fire at ½ acre. Due to the lack of fuel in the treated area the fire remained small, and spread slowly. Upon arrival Fire Fighters were able to aggressively engage and extinguish the fire.

**Project Success:** On July 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 a human caused fire (Shingle Fire 8,061 acres burned) started in an untreated Duck Creek Fuels unit in Swains Creek near Shingle Mill Canyon. Firefighting resources arrived within less than 30 minutes of dispatch to the fire. The fire fueled by a thick over grown unhealthy forest, high wind, high temperatures, and low relative humidity quickly spread advancing towards the Community of Swains Creek. Years prior to the fire (2005 to present) through efforts of the Forest Service, State Of Utah, and a Private contractor the Forest Service Land directly adjacent to the community had been thinned, logged, the slash piled and burned (I.E. Treated), as it was part of the Duck Creek Fuels Prescribed Fire Project. In these treated areas fire crews were able to aggressively engage and suppress the Shingle fire and limit the damage to only one structure being lost, when in fact there were several hundred homes with multiple other structures, and a large power utility line directly in the path of the fire. Untreated areas of the landscape were burned severely. Completely treated areas of the Duck Creek Fuels Prescribed Fire Project were burned only moderately. The moderately burned areas should recover, and still be productive in the future. One of the main goals behind the Duck Creek Fuels Prescribed Fire Project was to minimize the effects of a large catastrophic wildfire to the area and private properties. Due to the project design and completion of large portions of this project within close proximity to the community of Swains Creek the overall damage to treated Forest Service Lands, and Private Property was greatly reduced with miniscule loss.